

REMARKS

The mere formalities of the claim objections are attended to above without Festo-like considerations, because neither narrowing nor in response to a statutory requirement, except for the objection to the preambles of claims 9-12. No requirement for uniform preambles is known and, as none is cited, the objection is not understood and even less understood in comparison to claim 4, which is not objected to in this regard, for example.

The above attendance to the statutory rejections under 35 USC 112 should not raise any Festo-like considerations either, because not narrowing. Changing "can" to -- for -- in claims 3 and 4, for example, does not narrow the scope of any element of the original claim. Claim 13 has now been amended in order to more clearly define the distinguishing features of the subject matter of said claim, and in order to obviate this rejection, which should now be withdrawn.

More specifically, it is to be noted that the two inter-engagement means 2e referred to by the Examiner appear in figures 1 and 9 as being displaced at an angle of 180 degrees to each other and not at an angle of 90 degrees. Referring specifically to the description appearing in column 2, lines 49-53, we find the description that upright 2 also has constructions as 2d which form the bottoms of oppositely, laterally, outwardly, opening channels 2e of T-shaped cross-section". thus it is clear that channels 2e are arranged opposite to each other, and not at right angles to each other and once rail 1 has been inserted into the interior of a channel section upright 2, comprising a leg of the furniture, as referred to in column 2, lines 21-23, then channels 2e only allow for attachment on opposite sides of upright 2 as also seen in figures 6 and 9. since this arrangement is different from that defined in claim 13, this reference cannot anticipate the same.

Claims 1-4 have been rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Muller (US 5875596). While Muller indeed shows a panel member 12 and a profile 90, it is to be noted from figure 3, that profile 90 is adapted to be attached to panel 12 by means of C-shaped clip 106 as described in column 6, lines 9-12, wherein it is stated, "A generally C-shaped clip 106 may be positioned around connector arms 54 and 102 to secure vertical frame member 18 to vertical post 90."

Claim 1 and the claims dependent thereon, have also been amended to specifically recite the fact that the profiles are integral with the panel, and that said integral profiles enable direct complimentary engagement between two panels via their integrally attached profiles. In light of this amendment, the claims possess both novelty and inventive step vis-à-vis Muller and Muller as a primary reference in combination with any of the other references cited by the Examiner, since none of the secondary references teach or suggest the novel features of claim 1. Moreover, Muller can be viewed as teaching away from the novel construction defined in claim 1 which allows for simple and rapid inter-engagement between panels as shown e.g. with regard to figures 3, 4 and 5 of the present application as opposed to the multi-component and complex inter-engagement taught by Muller requiring the utilization of post 90 and clips 106 for inter-engagement of panels.

Reconsideration and allowance are, therefore, requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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